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This was followed by a very excellent selection from *Don Giovanni*, the principal features in which were Madlle. Tietjens' "Non mi dir," Mr. Santley's "Madamina," Mr. Sims Reeves' "Dalla sua pace," and the Sestett "Sola, sola." In consequence of the indisposition (as we understood) of Madlle. Sandrina, we should also mention that Miss Edith Wynne gave a very graceful rendering of "Batti, batti;" and also took the part of Zerlina in the Sestett. Maurer's well-known Concertante Quartette, for violins, with orchestral accompaniments, was the first piece in the second part; and, performed as it was to perfection, by Messrs. Sinton, Blagrove, Carrodus and Hill, formed one of the most pleasing items in the concert. A new song by Mr. Arthur Sullivan, "I wish to tune my quivering lyre," is full of dramatic feeling, and instrumented for the orchestra with that skill and power so characteristic of all this young composer's works. It was splendidly sung by Mr. Santley; and both the singer and the composer were called for at the conclusion to receive the congratulations of the audience. Madlle. Liebhart, emboldened by her success as an actress as well as vocalist, again favoured the company with "Oh, dear, what can the matter be," in answer to an encore for the ballad, "Why are you wandering;" and received for her exertions quite as much applause as was bestowed upon Spohr's Nonetto. The Concert was concluded at a late hour by the National Anthem.

In reviewing the merits of this highly successful Festival, there can be but one opinion on the extreme efficiency of the band and chorus; and contrasting the solo vocalists with those at the last meeting at Gloucester, it is pleasurable to think that the policy of making the Festival really worthy of support, has superseded that of realising a larger sum by the engagement of several inferior artists. As we commented freely upon this course of proceeding in our notice of the meeting of 1865, we are glad to record our satisfaction at the liberal manner in which the musical arrangements have been carried out on the present occasion; and we feel convinced that it will now be seen, that the stability of the Three Choir Festivals can only be maintained by placing them as far as practicable on an equality with the great musical meetings in other places.

In conclusion, we must not omit to mention that Mr. Townshend Smith ably presided during the Festival at the electric organ (erected for the occasion by Messrs. Bryceson), and that Mr. Done was the pianoforte accompanist at the Evening Concerts. We must also tender our thanks to those Stewards with whom we were brought into direct communication, for their uniform courtesy; and especially to Mr. J. H. Brown, the Secretary, who, during a most arduous week, was indefatigable in his endeavours to promote the comfort of all whose duties led them to seek his advice and aid.

We are glad to be able to state (from what we believe to be reliable authority) that the sum collected for the Charity during the Festival will amount to nearly £1,400.

INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF BEETHOVEN.

By R. M. HAYLEY.

(Continued from p. 508.)

Although Beethoven showed a due appreciation of creature comforts, he was by no means given to the pleasures of the table, and his inattention to domestic arrangements occasionally led him into strange escapades.

He has repeatedly dined at a tavern, while a friend whom he had invited to his own table, in vain awaited his return, and remained sufficiently long to prevent his ever again accepting an invitation from so inconsiderate a host. But this habit of forgetfulness many a time placed his own personal comfort in peril. After indulging in some long reverie, or giving wings to his musical imagination as he lay extended on the green sward, he would suddenly rise and walk homewards, forgetting that he had left his hat behind him; so that not unfrequently he would arrive at home after a long absence bareheaded in the most showery weather, with his grey hair dripping with the rain.

He was no less careless as regards his manuscripts than in his household affairs. An anecdote is related of him which is highly characteristic of his habitual slovenliness. On the occasion of his removing from one lodging to another, he missed, when he came to put his music in order, the score of the *Kyrie Eleison* of his grand Mass. All search proved in vain, and Beethoven, as usual, became greatly irritated, as the loss was irreparable. After several days, the sheets of paper on which the precious music was inscribed, were found encircling a parcel of old boots and kitchen utensils. The missing parts were cleaned, re-arranged, and restored to their proper place; and we are told that when Beethoven afterwards thought of the strange treatment to which these fruits of his genius had been subjected, he could never refrain from indulging in a hearty laugh.

The observance of forms was an impossibility to Beethoven, even when peremptorily prescribed by the rules of propriety. The conventionalities of etiquette he could never master, and he never wished to know anything about them. His strange behaviour was often the source of great perplexity to those about him. When he was introduced to the Archduke Rudolph, and during his subsequent intercourse with him, the formalities he was expected to observe were frequently pointed out to him. He confessed his shortcomings, and promised amendment, but there the matter dropped. On the next occasion he was as far off as ever from the attainment of the desired mode of address. One day, when, to use his own expression, he was being tutored in court etiquette, he made his way, in a violent passion, to the Archduke, and roundly told him that, although he felt the most profound respect for his person, the strict observance of the prescribed ceremonies was out of his power, and that he begged to state, once for all, that he could not undertake them. The Archduke smiled good humouredly, and gave directions to his servants that in future Beethoven should be suffered to take his own way unmolested.

Amongst Beethoven's various peculiarities was an inveterate habit of continually changing his place of abode. No sooner was he settled in a lodging, than something about it displeased him, and he removed to another, often forgetting to give notice to quit—an oversight which sometimes brought him into great trouble. At one time, he had four different lodgings on his hands, for all of which he had to pay. The natural result of these frequent changes was that his furniture and papers were never in order; for they had scarcely begun to recover from the effect of one removal, before another was in store. As might be expected, Beethoven shewed little care or taste in matters of furniture, and still less in his personal attire. Although he always exhibited a

personal cleanliness, he avoided in his dress everything like show or extravagance; and from his youth his demeanour had been always marked by a certain *gaucherie* and awkwardness. In his movements and gestures he was very ungraceful, and clumsy to a degree in everything which he did. His friend Ries observed that he seldom took anything into his hand which he did not let fall, and thus many valuable articles were broken. When writing at the piano-forte, he would overturn the inkstand upon the instrument. In shaving, he used to cut himself unmercifully, but he would never allow a barber to perform the operation. What is very remarkable, he never could learn to keep time in dancing. As regards housekeeping, he was ever ready to confess that he had no head for calculating. He did not, therefore, make the most of his income, and his style of living was more expensive than was necessary: but, although he was destitute of almost every comfort, he seldom made any complaint, nor did he readily accept any assistance, even from friends who were acquainted with his circumstances.

Although the compositions of Beethoven were highly esteemed amongst his countrymen, and every new work coming from his hand was eagerly sought after, he, like others, had to undergo the test of criticism; and this, to a person of his temper, was by no means agreeable. Sometimes his friends wished to persuade him to make retrenchments in his pieces, when, notwithstanding their beauty, they appeared too long, but in these attempts they seldom succeeded. Beethoven defended every bar with parental partiality, and the critic, if he persisted, was sure to bring on himself some rough language; for Beethoven, when in a passion, spared nobody. Sometimes, however, he would listen to these remonstrances, but never yielded without a strong debate; and even then would never consent to abridge a movement, though he would withdraw it altogether from the piece and substitute a shorter one in its place. Thus, in the well-known Sonata in C major (Op. 53), there was at first a long *Andante* in F. Beethoven, after keen discussions as to the excessive length of this Sonata, replaced the *Andante* by the little introduction which now precedes the *Rondo*, and published the *Andante* separately.

The most violent dispute of this kind took place on the subject of his celebrated opera *Fidelio*. This opera was produced in the year 1806; but the cold reception which it met with was the source of great disappointment and mortification to its author. He imputed this to the evil machinations of his numerous enemies, but the truth is that the time for its first representation was ill chosen. The French troops had but recently entered Vienna; those who patronised music being the most affluent part of the community, had left the city; and thus the audience consisted chiefly of French officers, and others not fully competent to form a correct opinion as to the merits of the new piece. A letter from Stephen von Brenning to Dr. Wegeler, gives some interesting details upon this subject. It is dated from Vienna, 2nd June, 1806.

"I believe," he says "that I promised to write to you respecting Beethoven's new Opera, and I now redeem my promise. The music is the most beautiful and perfect I ever heard. The subject is interesting. It represents the deliverance of a prisoner through the fidelity and courage of his wife. The opera was performed for the first time seven days after the entrance of the French army, and therefore at a most unpropitious moment. The theatres were deserted, and Beethoven having remarked some imperfections in the text, withdrew the opera after it had been performed but three times. When order was restored in the city, he and I together set to work to render the work more attractive. I re-wrote the whole of the

libretto, and rendered the action more rapid and lively. Beethoven abridged many portions, and it was repeated three times with the greatest applause. But his enemies have carried their opposition so far, since he had offended them on its re-production, that the opera has not been performed since. They had previously thrown many obstacles in his way. He wished, when the opera was re-produced, to substitute the title of *Fidelio* for that of *Leonora*, under which title it first appeared; but, in violation of an express promise to that effect, the original title re-appeared in the bills."

This attempt at reviving this celebrated opera, occurred nearly two years after its original representation. Beethoven's friends were of opinion that the opera would be improved by being made shorter. But changes in the text demanded changes in the music, and curtailments too, were necessary. Curtailments! who was to be bold enough to propose curtailments to Beethoven? Before the re-production of the piece in 1807, a meeting was held at the house of Prince Lichnowsky, for the purpose of considering the subject. Besides the Prince and Princess, the party consisted of the poet Collin and Stephen von Brenning, who had together revised the *libretto*, the tenor singer Rockel, the bass singer Meyer, and Beethoven himself. At first Beethoven stood firm, defending his work piecemeal without losing his temper; but, his indignation knew no bounds when the general opinion declared itself for the omission of entire portions of the work. Meyer asserted that the principal air for *Pizarro* must be removed, since no singer could give it effect. Whereupon the composer flew into a rage, and stormed at the whole company. They succeeded, however, in pacifying him, and he agreed to give up this air and put another in its place. The air which he substituted is that very noble one which is now marked No. 7 in the score. Once brought into a complying mood, Beethoven became wonderfully tractable, and the whole affair was arranged to general satisfaction. This rehearsal, disputes included, lasted from seven in the evening till two in the morning. The Prince then ordered supper to be brought in, and the night ended merrily.

Beethoven immediately set about making the changes agreed upon. He made wondrous sacrifices to satisfy what, doubtless, he considered the caprices of his friends. A duet here, an air there, and a trio in another place, were expunged at their united requests. But in spite of his compliance, Beethoven had the mortification of finding that a formidable cabal was raised against him; and, notwithstanding its first reception, the continuance of the opera was limited to three representations. Beethoven's disappointment was extreme. He was at this time in very straitened circumstances, and had reckoned on considerable advantage from the success of the piece. The failure of his hopes disgusted him with his art, and it was a long time before he got over it and returned, by degrees, to his musical occupations.

The original failure of this exquisite opera, is one of those occurrences which we often meet with in the history of the art. It was too much in advance of the period when it was produced, and could not be understood by the mass of the public. *Fidelio* was afterwards revived in Berlin, and hailed with enthusiasm, and it was speedily received with acclamations all over Germany. It was not known in England till 1832, when it was first performed in the original language, by the fine German company engaged that season at the opera house, by the enterprising, but unfortunate Mr. Monck Mason; and we need hardly remind our musical readers of the success with which it has since been brought out

in an English version at Drury Lane. Unfortunately for the musical stage, *Fidelio* is Beethoven's sole dramatic work. It was said during the latter years of his life, that he was engaged in the composition of another opera, entitled *Melusina*; but nothing has been heard of it since his death, nor does it appear that any vestige of it was found amongst his papers.

But to return to our narrative. Beethoven's various occupations and ever changing frame of mind had for a lengthened period interrupted his correspondence with Dr. Wegeler, of Coblenz. It was renewed by Beethoven himself in 1810. His letter, which appears to have been written in no cheerful mood, begins with an apology for his long silence, and he alludes, in piteous terms, to his cruel malady, which appears to have attained such a height that his deafness was nearly total. "My good old friend," he writes, "I can almost believe that you will be surprised when you receive these lines, and yet I can assure you, though you have no written proof of the fact, that you have never ceased to be present to my memory. For some years I have ceased to lead a tranquil and retired life, and have been dragged by force into the great world; but I have never acquired a taste for it—quite the contrary. Who has escaped the storm that has been raging around us? And yet I might have been happy, nay, one of the happiest of men, were it not for the evil genius that has taken up his abode in my ears. Had I not read somewhere that no man ought voluntarily to quit life so long as he can do a good action, I should long since, by my own hand, have ceased to live. Oh! how beautiful is life—but for me its charm has fled for ever!"

This contemplation of suicide shows how his affliction must have preyed upon his mind. But yet, in the midst of all his distressing thoughts, he had time for the interchange of friendly sentiments; although everything was now tinged by a recollection of his own sad state. In writing to a female friend who was on the point of marriage, he says: "You are going," dear Beltiuë, "to be married, or are already so, and I have not been able to see you again. May all the happiness with which wedlock blesses man and wife abundantly rest on you and your husband. What shall I say about myself? I cry with Schiller's *Johanna*, 'Pity my fate.' If years are still granted me, I will thank the Most High—Him who embraces all in Himself for them, and for all the weal or woe that may be in store for me. When you write to Goethe, seek out all the words that may best express my most sincere respect and admiration. I am on the point of writing to him myself respecting *Egmont*, for which I have composed the music, and I have done so purely out of love to his poetry, which gives me great pleasure. But, indeed, how can we be sufficiently grateful to so eminent a poet who is the precious jewel of his country! I returned this morning at four o'clock from a party where I laughed a great deal, only to weep nearly as much to-day. Riotous mirth often has the effect of forcing me to retire within myself."

Beethoven, while he held in utter contempt all worldly rank and titles, exalted the dignity of the artist to a very high pitch. His meeting with Goethe at Teplitz led him to make some reflections on both these points in a letter addressed to the same lady. "Kings and princes," he says, "may easily make professors and privy councillors, and bedizen them

with titles and ribands; but great men—men that stand conspicuous from among the common herd—they cannot make. That they must leave alone; and when two men like myself and Goethe meet, we ought to be held in high esteem." So much for his personal vanity, which made him so indifferent to the distinctions which worldly rank alone confers! He then proceeds to give a proof of his consistency when, in company with the great poet, he encountered the Imperial family in the street. "Yesterday, on our way home we met the whole Imperial family. We saw them approaching from a distance, and Goethe left my arm to place himself at the side of the road. Say what I would I could not make him advance another step. I pressed my hat down upon my head, buttoned my great coat, and walked with folded arms through the thickest of the throng. Princes and parasites made way for me. The Archduke Rudolph took off his hat, and the Empress was the first to salute me. These great people know me. I saw, to my infinite amusement, the procession defile past Goethe. There he stood, hat in hand, bowing to the ground. I rallied him smartly for it. I gave him no quarter. Cast all his sins in his face, but especially those against yourself, dearest Beltiuë. We had just been speaking about you. Good God! if it had been my lot to have passed such a time with you as he did, depend upon it I should have produced many, many more great works. A musician is likewise a poet, and can suddenly be transported by a pair of eyes to a more beautiful world, where greater geniuses make game of him and set him excessively hard tasks. What thoughts came crowding upon me when I first saw you in the observatory during that genial April rain. It was a fruitful rain for me; the most beautiful music glided from your eyes into my heart; music that shall yet enchant the world when Beethoven shall no longer lead the players." What a relief to turn from the dark pages of Beethoven's history to his own record of such blissful moments as these! How must they have compensated for the bitter experience he had to undergo of many of the ills to which flesh is heir.

(To be continued.)

CRYSTAL PALACE.

ON Wednesday, the 16th ult., the Annual Concert of the Sol-fa Association was given with the utmost success. We have often alluded to the excellent progress of this Society; and have only to say that on the present occasion the choral music was given with even more than the usual amount of precision and refinement, especially the *Preghiera* from *Mosé*, and "Blessed for ever," from Spohr's *Last Judgment*. An interesting test of the power of the choir to sing at first sight was exhibited to the audience, a sacred part-song, the composition of Mr. Henry Smart, having been brought forward, the seal of the copies broken in the orchestra, and the parts distributed at once to the singers. The performance of this composition was most praiseworthy; every note being taken almost as correctly as if the choir had been previously acquainted with the work. Mr. J. Coward presided at the organ, and Messrs. Sarll and Proudman were the conductors.

The thirteenth series of the Saturday Concerts commences on the 3rd inst., under the able direction of Mr. Manns. There will be twenty-six Concerts—twelve before, and fourteen after Christmas; and the names of Madame Arabella Goddard, Mr. Charles Hallé, and Herr Joachim are mentioned in the prospectus as likely to appear during the season. In addition to the compositions already so well known at these Concerts, a number of